

29 April 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: Associate Deputy Director for Intelligence
SUBJECT : Critique of DDI Open House for Black
Faculties

Introduction

1. On 19 April 1974, the DDI held its first open house for social science faculties of predominantly black colleges and universities. The DDI's purpose was to promote better faculty contacts as an aid in recruiting black students. The following memorandum presents views expressed by the faculty members about the open house program and some initial judgments by the program coordinators* about how to better arrange things should we run the open house again. See specifically Paragraphs 12 and following for faculty recommendations for recruiting blacks.

Organization

2. Judging from numerous comments made during the day, the faculty members felt that the open house program was well-organized and efficiently run with respect to finances, scheduling, and accommodations. Most of the faculty expressed their pleasure with the open house day. One went so far as to say that it was the "best professional day" he had spent in his life. There were problems, however. The initial faculty response to the CIA open house invitations was disappointing and not what we had expected. Of the 33 invitations extended, only about one-third replied in writing, despite the fact that the invitation requested a reply. Subsequently, we phoned the faculty members we had not heard from, so that by 19 April, we had confirmed 23 of the 33 invitations. Even then, several people decided to come at the last minute, and it was not until just before the conference started that plans could be finalized for hotel reservations, the number of escorts needed, etc. Had the Office of Security not been so fully cooperative, there could have been a serious problem because of the shortness of time. From all this, we learned that in the future,

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it is absolutely essential to get the invitations out three or more weeks in advance, that they be short and simple, and that they clearly state that an RSVP is expected, whether or not one intends to come.

3. Another slight organizational hitch that occurred involved Agency recruiters in the field not being fully briefed on the details of the open house meeting. Several faculty members were given incorrect information about hotel and travel arrangements by our field recruiters because they had not been kept fully abreast of the planning.

4. It is difficult to see how the written instructions which we sent to each participant could have been clearer, but we could have included a map showing the hotel and Agency -- one or two participants drove.

5. Once the participants arrived, the program went relatively smoothly. The chief complaint from the faculty members was that they wished the schedule had not been so tightly organized. Typical of some of the comments made were the following:

"The visit was far too restrictive to work out contacts and exchange professional ideas."

"Just when a session got going, it seemed that it was time to move on."

Most professors said they would have liked to stay one and a half to two days.

6. The only other general problem during the day arose from the fact that most of the escorts did not know much about the Agency's personnel policies on minority employment. Many times during the day, the escorts were asked questions they were unable to answer. It may have appeared that the Agency escorts were trying to avoid answering some of the tougher questions, although no faculty member voiced this opinion. A briefing about Agency policy before the open house began probably would have eliminated most of this problem.

Content

7. The faculty clearly enjoyed the twofold nature of the day's program. Several professors commented that it was

important that they learn what the Agency does, as well as to find out our problems and programs with regard to minority hiring. As one guest stated, "It's good to know there's a DDI; I thought the Agency was just an international FBI."

8. It was also clear that the faculty members were impressed by the high rank of people they met. After the session with Mr. Colby, one professor commented that he knew we were serious after listening to the "man at the top."

9. Although greatly interested in what the Agency does, the faculty members were even more concerned about the personnel hiring practices of the Agency with regard to minorities. Repeatedly during the day, the Agency personnel (particularly the Office Chiefs) who met the faculty were asked how black students can apply for jobs, what criteria are used to judge applicants, and what skills are stressed. There was particular interest in the Agency Cooperative Program. Several faculty members said that they wished they had gotten to speak more with the head of the Agency's Cooperative Program. A similar high level of interest was shown in the Summer Intern Program. The Office Chiefs who spoke about these programs seemed to get the highest marks, while those with "canned briefings" which did not touch on personnel matters were less well received.

10. Along the same line, it was clear that our guests would have liked a greater opportunity to speak to black professionals in CIA. Indicative of the groups' interest was one statement made by a professor to an OSR black professional late in the afternoon during an office visit. She said,

You're the first black professional our group has gotten to speak with since we got here. Tell us what it is like to be black and work for CIA. What should I tell my black students when they ask why they should apply to CIA?

11. This desire for a greater exposure to black CIA analysts, echoed throughout the day by the visitors, might have been served if we had arranged a panel composed of black CIA professionals from the different DDI components. This, in retrospect, seems to have been an obvious oversight in our planning, and it would have added greatly to the day's program.

Recommendations

12. Recommendations* on how to attract black professionals to CIA made by the faculty members covered a variety of areas, but several general themes did emerge. First, everyone participating thought it was very important that the CIA make an effort to improve its community image, especially on the black campuses: "The only way years of distrust can be overcome is for CIA to go more public." Among the specific recommendations made relating to the concept of "image" were the following:

- Participate in seminars at black colleges. Let blacks and minorities know there is more to CIA than just "spies."
- Encourage CIA professionals to take sabbaticals of six months or longer at black schools. Again, the idea is to let blacks know what CIA, and particularly what the DDI is about.
- Make explicit the criteria for hiring. Let the prospective applicant know what items are needed to qualify.
- If an applicant is rejected, let him know why. Otherwise, the individual may have the feeling that the answer might have been different if his pigment was lighter.
- Send out more substantive literature (including unclassified memoranda and maps) to faculty members so that they can show their students what type of work the DDI does.

13. Another set of recommendations that were made might be classified under the "who and how to hire" category, including:

- Don't go after just the "superstars" and "hotshots." Everybody wants them, but there's a lot of good material in the middle of the pack.

* We do not here attempt to judge the value or feasibility of any of these recommendations.

- Look for potential, not just proven results. Students would not consider it/demeaning if they received extensive on-the-job training.
- Invite students as well as faculty to future get togethers.
- Hire a black psychologist to help interpret pre-employment test scores.

14. Several other recommendations of a more miscellaneous nature were also made. These include:

- Establish some kind of scholarship program for students in their junior and senior years. Many of the faculty said that their students were generally very financially pinched and that "money talks."
- Deal with faculty members rather than with placement bureaus when recruiting on campus.
- Increase the number of visits by recruiters, especially those seeking students for the Cooperative Program.

Follow-Up After 19 April

15. It is the consensus of the program coordinators (reinforced by their talks with the faculty members) that a careful follow-up effort is essential. We have already had our first application from a student who was told about CIA by one of the participating faculty members. One office just last week was able to elicit some valuable advice regarding a new applicant on the basis of the professional contact established by the open house. The coordinators each have ideas about how to carry out successful follow-up. This was thought to be outside the scope of this memorandum, however, and should be considered separately as deemed appropriate by the DDI and Office Directors.



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